

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4834

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

USINT BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY TRIPLI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, EG, XF, US

SUBJECT: PRESS REVIEW: US ROLE IN ME PEACE NEGOTIATIONS

REF CAIRO 6275

1. GUMHURIYYA'S DIPLOMATIC EDITOR HODA TAWFIQ IN JUNE 26 ARTICLE, MAKES STRONG CASE THAT US ME POLICY HAS BECOME MORE EVEN-HANDED. SHE MARSHALLS FOLLOWING EVIDENT: A. WITH REFERENCE TO SECRETARY KISSINGER'S ATLANTA SPEECH, TAWFIQ WRITES THAT KISSINGER HAS BEEN MAKING "IMPORTANT SIGNALS WHICH HAVE CAST LIGHT ON THE CHANGE WHICH HAS TAKEN PLACE IN AMERICA'S STAND AS A RESULT OF THE REASSESSMENT AND THE CONTINUATION OF ISRAELI INTRANSIGENCE". B. SECRETARY KISSINGER SPEAKS NOW ABOUT THE RIGHT OF STATES TO SAFEGUARD THEIR TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY...IT IS CLEAR THAT HE MEANS EGYPT AND SYRIA IN PARTICULAR, SINCE THEY HAVE RECOGNIZED INTERNATIONAL BORDERS. THIS IS ALSO A CLEARER HINT AT THE US POSITION VIS-A-VIS AN OVERALL SETTLEMENT. TAWFIQ COMMENTS: "THIS STATEMENT IS CONSIDERED THE MOST IMPORTANT STATEMENT MADE BY THE AMERICAN OFFICIALS SINCE THE ASWAN TALKS

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WERE STOPPED. THIS IN ITSELF MEANS A WARNING TO ISRAEL

BECAUSE IT WAS ISSUED A WEEK AGO FOLLOWING THE FORD-RABIN TALKS HELD IN WASHINGTON". C. FORD HAS MADE SEVERAL STATEMENTS AFFIRMING THAT AMERICA'S INTERESTS COME BEFORE THE INTERESTS OF ANY OTHER FOREIGN COUNTRY. TAWFIQ READS THIS AS A WARNING TO ISRAEL THAT US HAS COMMITMENTS OTHER THAN ITS COMMITMENT TO SAFEGUARD THE EXISTENCE OF ISRAEL.

2. IN DISCUSSING CURRENT STATUS OF NEGOTIATIONS, TAWFIQ STATES THAT GOE POSITION HAS NOT CHANGED SINCE ASWAN. CAIRO HAS NOTHING NEW TO OFFER IN RETURN FOR ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM OIL FILEDS AND TO THE EAST OF THE PASSES. US NOW IS CONDUCTING "LAST ROUND OF NEGOTIATIONS BEFORE IT THROWS ITS FULL WEIGHT AND DECLARES ITS STAND TOWARDS THE SETTLEMENT OF THE PROBLEM FOLLOWING THE REASSESSMENT OF ITS POLICY."

3. COMMENT: TAWFIQ, WHO OFTEN REFLECTS SENIOR FOREIGN MINISTRY VIEWS, APPEARS TO BE CONVINCED THAT SHOULD CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS ON "ISRAELI PLAN" (REFTEL) FALTER, USG WILL SAVE THE DAY AND STEP IN WITH ITS OWN PLAN. FROM TAWFIQ'S INTERPRETATION OF RECENT USG STATEMENTS AS INDICATING INCREASE IN EVEN-HANDEDNESS, IT IS OBVIOUS THAT SHE EXPECTS ANY US PLAN TO BE FAVORABLE TO THE EGYPTIAN POINT OF VIEW.

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